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IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Original) An electronic product manual comprising:

a plurality of data structures holding data representing a product and having a

hierarchical relationship as components and sub-components with each other;

a graphical user interface (GUI) configured to present data selected from the plurality

of data structures to a user in the form of displayed objects, receive input from the user, and

enable a user to select data from the plurality of data structures by selecting a displayed

object;

a first view of the selected data structure displayed in the GUI upon selection, the first

view comprising an image of the selected object;

a second view of the selected data structure displayed in the GUI upon selection, the

second view including information indicating a hierarchical relationship of the selected data

structure with respect to other data structures; and

a third view of the selected data structure displayed in the GUI upon selection, the

third view including component-specific information.

2. (Original) The product manual of claim 1 wherein the first, second and third views

of the selected data structure are displayed simultaneously.

3. (Amended) The product manual of claim 1 further comprising methods defined

within the graphical user interface enabling selection of any displayed object from any of the

first, second and third views, wherein the graphical user interface is configured to enable

selection of any displayed object from any of the first, second and third views.

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4. (Original) The product manual of claim 1 wherein the first view comprises a three-

dimensional image of the selected object having user-selectable sub-components.

5. (Original) The product manual of claim 1 wherein the first view further comprises

help information obtained from the selected data structure associated with a particular

displayed object and made visible in the first view when user input indicates a focus on the

particular displayed object.

6. (Original) The product manual of claim 1 wherein the second view comprises a

tree structure depicting the hierarchical relationship.

7. (Original) The product manual of claim 1 wherein the third view presents ordering

information relevant to the selected object.

8. (Original) The product manual of claim 1 wherein each of the plurality of data

structures includes data types relevant to the first, second and third views.

9. (Original) The product manual of claim 1 wherein at least one of the plurality of

data structures includes a pointer to an external data store having current information.

10. (Original) The product manual of claim 1 further comprising:

a selection tool operable to receive user input and indicate a user-selected object from

the plurality of displayed objects in one of the first, second, and third views; and

methods within the GUI for updating the first, second, and third views in response to

the user's selection of an object.

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wherein the GUI is configured to allow updating of the first, second, and third views in

response to the user's selection of an object.

11. (Original) The product manual of claim 10 wherein each of the plurality of data

structures defines a default perspective and the act of updating the first, second and third

views comprises presenting the default perspectives.

12. (Amended) A display object for product manual having a graphical user interface,

the display object corresponding to a real-world component of a system, the display object

comprising:

a link to a unit data structure;

first presentation methods means initiated in response to selection of the displayed

object and operable to retrieve an image of the display object from the unit data structure and

display the image using the graphical user interface;

second presentation methods means initiated in response to selection of the displayed

object and operable to retrieve a hierarchical view from the unit data structure and display the

hierarchical view using the graphical user interface; and

third presentation methods means initiated in response to selection of the displayed

object and operable to retrieve a information about the real-world component from the unit

data structure and display the information using the graphical user interface.

13. (Amended) The display object of claim 12 further comprising:

selection methods means operable to retrieve selected data from the unit data structure

in response to user input indicated selection of the displayed object.

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14. (Amended) The display object of claim 12 further comprising ordering methods

means implementing a product ordering interface for ordering the real-world component.

15. (Amended) The display object of claim 12 further comprising documentation

method means for obtaining a pointer to a documentation database from the unit data

structure and accessing the documentation database containing documentation associated

with the real-world component.

16. (Amended) The display object of claim 12 further comprising functionality

methods means for accessing a description of functionality of the real-world component from

the unit data structure.

17. (Amended) The display object of claim 12 further comprising actions methods

means for accessing a description of actions that are possible to perform on the real-world

component from the unit data structure.

18. (Amended) The display object of claim 12 further comprising error state methods

means for accessing a description of potential error states for the real-world object from the

unit data structure.

19. (Amended) The display object of claim 12 further comprising:

animation methods coupled to communicate with the actions methods means for

retrieving animation sequence data from the unit data structure and generating an animation

depicting the actions on the graphical user interface.

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20. (Amended) The display object of claim 12 further comprising:

animation methods means coupled to communicate with the functionality methods for

retrieving functionality data from the unit data structure and generating an animation

depicting the functionality on the graphical user interface.

21. (Original) The display object of claim 12 further comprising data structures within

the unit data structure for indicating relationships between the display object and other,

external display objects, wherein the relationships mirror relationships between real-world

components.

22. (Original) The display object of claim 12 wherein the unit data structure includes a

definition of a default perspective for the display object in each of the first, second, and third

presentation methods.

23. (Original) A method for displaying a product manual for a particular product, the

product comprising a plurality of components and sub-components, in an interactive graphical

user interface, the method comprising the acts of:

gathering resources related to the product and its components and sub-components, the

information including information of types selected from the group consisting essentially of

documentation, ordering information, graphical display information, functionality, actions,

error states and animation;

organizing the information into sets of information related to particular components

and sub-components within the particular product;

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defining a unit object data structure to hold data for related to a particular component

irrespective of the data type; and

using data from the unit data structure of an initial component to generate a graphical

user interface corresponding to the unit data structure and presenting user-selectable links to

sub-component unit data structures.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23 further comprising the act of using the first

instance to instantiate subsequent instances of the unit object class for selected sub-

components.

25. (Original) An appliance comprising:

a plurality of subsystems cooperating to cause the appliance to perform one or more

functions;

an electronic control system including a data processor and memory capable of

executing program instructions to control operation of the subsystems;

an interface coupled to the data processor for accessing external data sources; and

computer code devices executing on the data processor to cause the processor to

implement a graphical user interface displaying data obtained from the external data sources.